THE FORM

OF

ADMITTING PROBATIONERS

INTO THE

Bishop Potter Memorial House,

PHILADELPHIA.

And of Receiving them into the Sisterhood,

SET FORTH BY THE

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE.

PHILADELPHIA.
M'Calla & Stavely, Printers, 237-9 Dock Street.
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OF

ADMITTING PROBATIONERS AND SISTERS

INTO THE

BISHOP POTTER MEMORIAL HOUSE.

The Service shall begin with singing the following Hymn: [No. 434 of the Hymnal.]

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1 Jesus, my Strength, my Hope,
On Thee I cast my care,
With humble confidence look up,
And know Thou hear'st my prayer:
Give me on Thee to wait,
'Till I can all things do;
On Thee, almighty to create,
Almighty to renew.

2 Give me a sober mind,
A self-renouncing will,
That tramples down and casts behind
The baits of pleasing ill:
A soul inured to pain,
To hardship, grief, and loss;
Ready to take up and sustain
The consecrated cross.

3 Give me a godly fear,
A quick, discerning eye,
That looks to Thee when sin is near,
And sees the tempter fly;
A spirit still prepared,
And arm'd with jealous care,
For ever standing on its guard,
And watching unto prayer.

4 Give me a true regard,
A single, steady aim,
Unmoved by threatening or reward,
To Thee and Thy great Name;
Give me a heart to pray,
To pray and never cease,
Never to murmur at Thy stay,
Or wish my sufferings less.

5 I rest upon Thy word,
The promise is for me;
My succour and salvation, Lord,
Shall surely come from Thee:
But let me still abide,
Nor from my hope remove,
Till Thou my patient spirit guide
Into Thy perfect love.

¶ Then shall be said the Litany, with this suffrage, immediately after that for Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

That it may please Thee to bless these Thine Handmaidens now to be admitted to this House (and

Sisterhood), and to pour Thy grace upon them, that they may duly exercise their ministry to the edifying of Thy Church, and the glory of Thy Holy Name.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

¶ The Litany being ended, there shall be sung one of the following hymns :

HYMN.

How blessed, from bonds of care
And earthly fetters free,
In singleness of heart and aim,
Thy servants, Lord, to be.
The hardest toil to undertake
With joy at Thy command,
The meanest office to receive
With meekness at Thy hand.

With willing heart and longing eyes,
To watch before Thy gate,
Ready to run the weary race,
To bear the heavy weight;
No voice of thunder to expect,
But follow calm and still,
For love can easily divine
The One Beloved's will.

Thus may we serve Thee, gracious Lord,
Thus ever Thine alone,
Our souls and bodies given to Thee,
The purchase Thou hast won.
Through evil or through good report
Still keeping by Thy side,
By life or death, in this poor flesh
Let Christ be magnified.

HYMN. No. 299 Hymnal.

1 We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be:
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

2 May we Thy bounties thus
As stewards true receive,
And gladly, as Thou blessest us,
To Thee our first-fruits give.

3 O! hearts are bruised and dead
And homes are bare and cold,
And lambs for whom the Shepherd bled,
Are straying from the fold.

4 To comfort and to bless,
To find a balm for woe,
To tend the lone and fatherless
Is angel's work below.

5 The captive to release,
To God the lost to bring,
To teach the way of life and peace,
It is a Christ-like thing.

6 And we believe Thy word,
Though dim our faith may be;
Whate'er for Thine we do, O Lord,
We do it unto Thee.

¶ Then shall be said the Service for the Holy Communion, with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, as followeth:

¶ The Collect, "O Almighty Lord and Everlasting God," to be followed by,

O Almighty GOD, who didst call Phœbe and Dorcas, and other holy women to be servants of Thy Church, and didst enable them to succour Thine Apostles, and others also; behold these Thy servants who have given themselves to a like ministration. So replenish them with all Christian graces, and adorn them with innocency of life, that, by their labors and good examples, they may faithfully serve Thee to the glory of Thy Name, and the benefit of Thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Epistle. 1 St. Peter v. 5–11.

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for GOD resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of GOD, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the GOD of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ Or, 2 Cor. vi. 1–10.

We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of GOD in vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of GOD, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of GOD, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

The Gospel. St. Mark xiv. 3–9.

And (*Jesus*) being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on His head; and there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the

poor: and they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on Me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but Me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying. Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

¶ Then shall be said the Nicene Creed.

¶ Then shall be sung either of these Hymns.

HYMN.

Sisters in Christ! All-holy tie,
Fruit of His own electing love,
The fellowship and lineage high
Of sainted companies above.

Workers with Christ! All-holy toil,
Easy, through Him, when most severe;
Cares shall not daunt, nor sin shall soil,
So that we always feel Him near.

Earth shall not lure. No! Saviour-God,
Our steps shall on Thy will attend;
Gladly we go where Thou hast trod—
Thy glory all our aim and end.

Thou all our portion and delight,
Thy love the brightness of our days;
We, faint and feeble, Thou our might,
Our weakness turning to Thy praise.

Yea, we will praise with all Heaven's host,
Together magnify again,
Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
GOD, our own GOD: Amen: Amen.

WORKING WITH THEE.

"And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

1 Working, O Christ, with Thee,
Working with Thee,
Unworthy, sinful, weak,
Although we be;
Our all to Thee we give,
For Thee alone would live,
And by Thy grace achieve—
Working with Thee.

2 Along the city's waste,
Working with Thee;
Our eager footsteps haste,
Like Thee to be;
The poor we gather in,
The outcast raise from sin,
And labour souls to win—
Working with Thee.

3 The little ones we greet,
Working with Thee;
And oft Thy words repeat,
"Come unto Me."

From sorrow, want and gloom,
We bid them welcome home,
Beneath our sheltering dome—
Working with Thee.

4 Saviour, we weary not
Working with Thee;
As hard as Thine, *our* lot
Can never be.
Our joy and comfort this—
Thy grace sufficient is;
This changes toil to bliss,
Working with Thee.

5 To let us labour on,
Working with Thee,
Till earth to Thee is won,
From sin set free.
Till men from shore to shore
Receive Thee, and adore,
And join us evermore,
Working with thee.

¶ The women to be admitted to the House and the Probationers to be admitted to the Sisterhood shall then be bidden forward to the Chancel, and the Bishop, or some other Minister appointed by him, shall read the following Address to the People:

Dearly beloved in the Lord, we are gathered together here in the sight of GOD and of this Congregation, to admit these persons present into this House (*and Sisterhood*). It is written in the Holy Gospels that devout women followed our Lord Jesus Christ, and

ministered unto Him of their substance. We read also in the Epistles of the Holy Apostle Saint Paul, and in the writings of the primitive Fathers, that devout women were set apart for the Service of the Church, and Saint Paul, writing to Timothy, the first Bishop of Ephesus, gives directions for their appointment and duties. Mary, Martha, Lydia, Priscilla, Dorcas, Lois, and Eunice, as of those who ministered to the sick, clothed the naked, and instructed the ignorant, are honoured by name in the Church of Christ. It was a godly custom in ancient times that such should be admitted to these ministrations in the presence of the Faithful with solemn supplications for their growth in grace, and for their increase in fidelity, zeal, and obedience in the holy work whereunto they are called.

¶ Then shall follow this Address to the Candidates.

And as for you who are now to be set apart to the holy work of commending Christ's love by ministering to the sick, the ignorant, the fallen, the afflicted, in the Name, and for the love of Jesus; we exhort you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you have constantly in your remembrance into how high a dignity and charge you are called; even to be helpers of those who are messengers, and watchmen, and stewards of the Lord in winning souls to Christ; and to see that you never cease during your term of service from your labors, care, and diligence, until you have done all that in you lieth, according to your bounden duty, to lift up the fallen, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort

the sick, the weary and the heavy-laden; and to bring them that are without into the fold of Christ.

But forasmuch as this service is of so great difficulty, you see how watchfully and earnestly you ought to apply yourselves thereto, that you may fulfil the same and give no occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully. Howbeit you cannot have a mind and will thereto of yourselves; for these are of GOD alone. You have need, therefore, to pray earnestly for His Holy Spirit to help you in all things, to be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures and to be well instructed in the ways of His Church, so that you may be patterns of all womanly and Christian virtues. We are assured that you have already, by GOD's grace, determined to give yourselves wholly to the service of the Lord, and especially to that ministration to which you have been called, and that you will apply yourselves, as far as may be, to this one thing.

You are not only bound, as every Christian is bound, to live to the honor of God in such duties of piety and charity as are possible amid secular engagements, but you have regarded it as your especial privilege and calling to serve Him with all your time and powers, in the weak and suffering members of His Body.

You are therefore the more bound to be dead indeed unto sin and to the pleasures and riches of the world, and to seek your joy in this service of gratitude and love to Him Who took upon Him the form of a servant, and suffered for you, even unto death,—the death of the Cross.

Holy women of old, *one while* sat at the feet of

Jesus, intent upon listening to His Heavenly Wisdom; and *again* were seen waiting upon Him and ministering to Him, even to the anointing of His Body for the burying.

So must you always desire, on the one hand, to attend upon the Lord Jesus, in His Word and Ministry and Sacraments; to meditate upon the unsearchable mysteries of His truth and grace; and, on the other, to serve Him actively in His members, with a *love* which beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things,—a love which never faileth.

Then will His blessed promises be yours, in actual and enjoyable possession.

We believe you to *be free* for an act of special self-consecration to works of piety and charity, but we admit of no irrevocable vows in this matter.

Circumstances may possibly change; and superior claims to your services arise in your families, or should Providence clearly indicate that your place of duty is elsewhere, the proper authority will recognize the necessity; and you will obey the summons to depart, as you now obey the voice that seems to call you to enter into this Sisterhood.

In saying that you are to serve in loving self-sacrifice, in meekness and humility, after the example of the blessed Jesus and of His Apostles, we say all.

In such a service there can be no room for pride and self-will, for vanity and ostentation. There can be no doing of your works to be seen and praised of men; but you will do all in the Name of the Lord

Jesus, out of love to Him and to the souls redeemed by Him.

Finally, you and these Sisters in Christ are to live *together* and to work *together*, as the acknowledged daughters of *Him* Who said: "*By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.*"

He humbled Himself to show His love unto His own, by the lowliest service, even to the washing of their feet. We are to imitate His example, and you especially in your daily service, each *with* and *to* the other, are to show in every way that love which leads us in lowliness of mind to "esteem others better than ourselves."

Whosoever will be great among you, let her be the servant of all. If you are *one* by a living faith in our common Lord and Saviour, strong and tender indeed is the tie which binds you together in spirit and affection.

You will gladly humble yourselves in offices of love the one to the other. And you will be gentle and childlike in your respect and obedience to those who are over you in the Lord; thus keeping all things in order and harmony, and diffusing everywhere a sweet and heavenly calm.

Address to the Candidates for the Sisterhood standing next to the Bishop.

But Beloved, before admitting you into the Society for pious and charitable works known as the *Sisterhood of the Memorial House*, it is meet that you answer,

advisedly, before us and before these witnesses, to the following questions:

Will you conform to the rules and discipline of this Society, rendering willing obedience to those who are set over you: thus seeking to uphold the authority of your superiors, and to promote the welfare of the Sisterhood; preserving it in peace and harmony?

Ans. I will strive to do so.

Will you diligently perform the duties which may be required of you, with a cheerful spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in all good works, and keeping yourself unspotted from the world?

Ans. I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper.

Know this, Beloved, that, except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchman waketh but in vain: Will you then labor only in the Lord; seeking your strength in Him? Will you watch always in the Lord, looking to Him for deliverance to keep your feet from falling?

Will you by constant prayer, seek to be ever guided in your goings, and directed in your duties, as it shall please the Lord?

Ans. I will do so by the help of God.

The Bishop rising, will say:

Our help is in the Name of the Lord;

Answer. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bishop. Blessed be the Name of the Lord;

Answer. Henceforth, world without end.

Bishop. Lord, hear our prayer;

Answer. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Bishop. Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, Who hast given these Thy Servants the desire and will to separate themselves from the world, that they may the more entirely minister to the spiritual and bodily needs of the sinful and the suffering; strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear, now and for ever. *Amen.*

¶ The Bishop then taking each approved candidate for the Sisterhood by the right hand, shall say to her:

Sister ———, I admit Thee to the Sisterhood of the Memorial House, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and be thou a faithful and obedient dispenser of the gifts and grace committed to thee, in the station where thou shalt be appointed to serve.

¶ Then shall the Bishop invoke this blessing upon each Probationer and Sister as she kneels before him:

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and sanctify thee: and so fill thee with all faith, wisdom, charity, and humility, that thou mayest serve before Him to the glory of His great Name, and the benefit of His Holy Church, and in the end attain to everlasting life; through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving GOD, Who makest us both to will and to do those things which are good and acceptable unto Thy divine Majesty; we make our humble supplication unto Thee for these Thy servants, now set apart and dedicated to a holy service, in works of piety and charity. Let Thy Fatherly hand, we beseech Thee, ever be over them; let Thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of Thy word, and in loving imitation of Thy works of mercy wrought on earth by Thy dear Son, that they may glorify Thy Name, and in the end obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one GOD, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ After which the Minister shall proceed according to the form prescribed for the Holy Communion, beginning at these words, "Ye who do truly," &c.

¶ Before the Benediction shall be said the following Prayer:

Almighty GOD and Heavenly Father, who hast vouchsafed to accept the service and ministration of these Thy servants, who humbly seek to follow the godly example of those holy women who ministered to Thy dear Son and His blessed Apostles, look upon them with the eyes of Thy mercy, and strengthen them with the Holy Ghost; and as they desire to dedicate themselves specially to Thy service in the care of the sick, in visiting the poor, in teaching the ignorant, in seeking out the erring, in comforting the

sorrowful, and leading sinners to the Saviour, we pray Thee especially to defend them with Thy heavenly grace, that they may continue in this holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for them to walk in. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that all sinful affections may die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in them. Grant that they may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. Grant that having thus dedicated themselves to Thee for these charitable works, they may also be endued with heavenly virtues adequate to all the duties, trials and temptations of their holy calling, that they may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Let Thy Fatherly hand, we beseech Thee, ever be over them; let Thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; let Thy good angels have charge of them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of Thy Word, and so bless them in their labours, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. *Amen.*

PRINCIPLES AND RULES OF THE BISHOP POTTER MEMORIAL HOUSE.

The Institution is under the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese who places its government under a Council of his appointment, and he also appoints the Sister in Charge on the nomination of the Council.

I.

The members of this House give themselves unreservedly, for the term of their service, to whatever work may be assigned them.

II.

The work is divided into two departments, Nursing and Mission Work.

III.

The members of this Household comprise three classes, Probationers, Full Members, and those who come for special training or service without joining the Sisterhood.

IV.

Any one accepted as a Probationer remains under training for six months at least, when her future course will be decided on. She must not be ordinarily under 25 or over 40 years of age.

V.

Those who have completed satisfactorily their probationary term, may become full Sisters, by engaging for a term of service of not less than one, or more than three years. At the expiration of which time it may be renewed if desired.

VI.

Every member of the household is bound to conform to the rules, orders, and regulations of the House.

VII.

Every one in proportion to her pecuniary ability, is expected to aid in the support of the House by contributions to the common fund during her continuance in it.

VIII.

The government and regulation of the Household are vested in the Sister in Charge, to whom all the other members are expected to render cheerful obedience. She has charge of the funds and appropriates them at her discretion to the necessary expenses of the House and community; in doing which she is to be thoughtfully frugal as a Steward of the Lord. She is required to keep accurate accounts of all income and outlay, and to exhibit the same whenever desired by the proper authorities. She can choose an Assistant in her labors from among the other Sisters.

IX.

While sisterly aid and hospitality will be extended, as far as practicable, to any one disqualified for active duty during the term of her engagement, only those who shall have completed three terms of three years each can have a claim (so far as they require it) to permanent maintenance.

ALLOTMENT OF WORK.

The Sisters and inmates of the House are appointed to their respective departments by the Sister in Charge, after which, during working hours, they are under the direction of the Lady superintending their department. They are expected to conform punctually to the appointed Order of the Day, with which they will be furnished, observing faithfully the stated hours.

NURSING DEPARTMENT

Includes the Hospital and out-door nursing. The Hospital motto, "Heal the body to save the soul," indicates the first and fundamental rule of the Hospital Sister. It is to be her endeavor so to nurse the sick entrusted to her care, that while soothing and relieving their bodily ailments, she may be the messenger of God's grace to their souls.

Those Sisters engaged in the care of the out-door sick, should go nowhere without the direction of the Sister in Charge, who will also judge of their physical condition, and the number

of hours to be devoted to their work, which will not be simply taking care of the sick, but making beds, taking care of the children, cooking suitable food for the invalid, &c. Preferences always given to those in our own district.

MISSION DEPARTMENT

Includes daily visiting in the district assigned by the Lady superintending that department, from whom the visitor (Sister or Probationer) will receive instructions, and to whom weekly reports must be made; in addition to which there should be frequent conference with the Sister in Charge, who will be expected to be always ready to give aid and advice in all matters relating to the work, which also includes attendance at the Mother's Meeting, and teaching in the Sewing, Night and Sunday Schools.

DRESS.

The Hospital Sisters will wear a simple cap and white apron when in the Hospital; and all will, at all times, adopt an attire of becoming simplicity and inexpensiveness.

RECREATION.

Every member shall have at least two hours daily. Those in the Hospital Department for recreation and out-door exercise. Those in the Mission Department for recreation and study, besides an afternoon in the week, which shall be assigned them. Visits from friends may be received on any day, only during the hours of recreation. It is desired that the Hospital Sister shall spend at least half of the appointed recreation hours in out-door exercise.

THE SISTER IN CHARGE

Is responsible for the proper accommodation of the members of the House. She exercises a mother's care as to their health and comfort. She has the discretionary power of dispensing with the observance of the Rules. She directs the employment of the members in the House, and in her absence her appointed Assistant acts for her and can be applied to accordingly.

When a Sister wishes to retire from the work she must give notice to the Sister in Charge, and she can be released for a valid cause, such as family considerations, or any circumstance which may render her service necessary at home. The engagement can also be annulled by the consent of the Council, who do not wish to retain unwilling services.

Every Sister sent out of the House to work, will continue to act under the direction of the House, but she will be placed under the special protection of the Bishop or the Rector of the Parish in which she is to work.